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## 4 The CLIL Tool Kit: Transforming theory into practice

This chapter builds on the theoretical issues raised in the previous chapters. It provides a tool kit for teachers to map CLIL practice for their own context and learners. It is based on two core principles: that all learners have an entitlement to quality teaching and learning environments, and that CLIL has a contribution to make in achieving this.

Successful CLIL practice is likely to require teachers to engage in alternative ways of **planning** for effective learning. We recognize that, for busy professionals, this is a challenge. Connecting theoretical ideas to changing practice requires time, patience and professional support. This chapter suggests processes and tools which can be changed or adapted to suit any context without compromising the need to address fundamental issues of effective and appropriate integration of content and language learning. For those practitioners who are in the early stages of CLIL development, we suggest starting ‘small’ by piloting and experimenting with **a few lessons as first steps**. As confidence grows and as issues from specific contexts are addressed, then those involved become better prepared to explore tensions between visions or ideals and the realities of classroom contexts. As we discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, there is neither one preferred CLIL model, nor one CLIL methodology. The CLIL approach is flexible in order to take account of a wide range of contexts. Individual contexts have to define how integrated learning can be realized and to determine the combination and complementary value of the CLIL language (the medium for learning) and the non-language content. It is also the responsibility of key players in those contexts to interpret according to statutory or national/regional curricular requirements what is meant by quality content and language integrated teaching and learning. However, for CLIL to be effective, certain fundamental principles must be recognized as essential – it is not the case that any kind of teaching or learning *in* another language is CLIL. As CLIL is a flexible construct, it is all the more important that those involved with planning and delivering the CLIL curriculum should have the means to define and support a contextualized interpretation of CLIL, to make explicit the fundamental principles upon which it is based and to put in place rigorous monitoring and evaluation processes. In other words, there is both the need and the opportunity for teachers to develop professional confidence and to ‘own’ their practice. This chapter makes some suggestions about how ‘owning’ one’s practice of CLIL might be approached.

The Tool Kit presented in this chapter is process-oriented. It describes six stages for creating a personalized Tool Kit. These stages are based on a class-based inquiry approach which stems from the widely used ‘plan–do–review’ cycle. At each stage, the Tool Kit provides a range of questions from which CLIL teachers can select and generate their own set of questions relevant to their own contexts. The questions are there to guide CLIL

teachers in creating and developing their own classroom practices. They provide a starting point, a basis and a catalyst for further development, as well as a more holistic overview for CLIL planning. The complete set of questions can be found in the Appendix to this chapter. The Tool Kit does not include lesson planning templates, since these will grow from the tools selected in different contexts. However, there are some examples of how CLIL teachers have used the Tool Kit in the Appendix. Other conceptual tools described in Chapter 3 are also part of the Tool Kit, including the 4Cs Framework, the Language Triptych and the CLIL Matrix, to be used as appropriate.

The Tool Kit starts with the construction of a shared CLIL vision. Subsequent stages – analysing and personalizing the context, planning a unit, preparing a unit, monitoring and evaluating CLIL, and reflection and inquiry – lead towards the creation of or contribution to collaborative learning communities. In these professional communities, class-based inquiry further informs the development and transformation of CLIL according to context-specific agendas. The need for a continuing quality audit to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the CLIL programme is fundamental to successful classroom teaching and learning – flexibility is not to be mistaken for an ‘anything goes’ approach.

Finally, the stages are built on the principle that the questions are selective yet interactive triggers for discussion and reflection, which in turn contribute to professional learning at different levels.

### Stage 1: A shared vision for CLIL

The first stage involves those interested in CLIL – language teachers, subject teachers, primary teachers and their colleagues, programme managers and so on, engaging in the construction of a shared vision for CLIL. If there is no tradition of CLIL in a school, the first challenge for pioneers is to bring together a group to share ideas and explore how CLIL might operate in their school. This ‘starting small’ approach may consist, for example, of one subject teacher and one language teacher or a class teacher working with a colleague as a critical friend. In some schools, where teachers are starting CLIL on their own, joining one of the CLIL virtual networks can provide a forum for sharing ideas. Creating a shared vision has benefits which go beyond CLIL.

Vision allows us to look beyond the problems that beset us today, giving direction to our passage into the future. Even more important, vision energizes that passage by inspiring and guiding us into action.

(Papert and Caperton, 1999)

The following ideas are suggestions for supporting professional dialogue using whichever language seems most appropriate. Two fundamental trigger questions invite some ‘blue skies’, creative thinking:

- What is our ideal CLIL classroom and what goes on there?
- In an ideal world, what do we want our CLIL learners and teachers to be able to achieve?

A range of brainstorming and discussion techniques for building an ideas bank provides the basis for vision sharing and prioritizing, so that relevant overarching goals can be constructed. These overarching goals will be referred to as ‘global goals’ to describe the longer-term vision for any CLIL programme, whatever the extent of that programme. Examples of global goals might be ‘to increase learner engagement’ or ‘to develop confident learners who use the CLIL language spontaneously in a range of settings’. Global goals are not prescribed, although they may reflect wider educational values and beliefs. However, it is extremely important that global goals are ‘owned’ by the professionals involved. A ‘Diamond 9’ activity, for example, may provide a useful catalyst for identifying and sharing these goals in a reflective and supportive way. To start the activity, pairs or small groups of CLIL teachers require nine ‘I want’ statements. These statements can be created either from suggestions made by individual teachers, or by using the examples below. The statements need to be written on small squares of paper. Composing individual statements provides teachers with a chance to reflect on and articulate their own CLIL vision; for example:

I want my CLIL classroom to be a vibrant, interactive and motivating place.

I want learners to learn confidently in the target language – this means they will be willing to talk.

I want to ensure that learners achieve at least the equivalent academic standards in CLIL as they would in their first language.

I want to be part of a CLIL teaching and learning community where we can share ideas and resources.

I want to access a range of CLIL materials, including authentic materials at the appropriate level.

I want learners to benefit from CLIL by developing wider intercultural understanding through using language to learn.

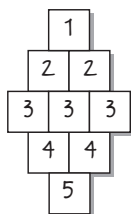
I want to motivate learners to use the CLIL language in a range of different ways (e.g. for learning, for chatting, for organizing their learning, for conducting out-of-classroom work, for written project work).

I want to involve learners (and their parents or carers), colleagues and administrators in this innovation so that it will become part of the regular curriculum.

I want the theme of the CLIL unit to challenge learners and help them acquire new knowledge, skills and understanding.

In pairs or small groups, teachers discuss each square in turn and create a consensual diamond shape which prioritises individual statements in order to arrive at a shared vision – the most popular statement placed in position one, the next two in position two

and so on. This kind of activity provides the working group with opportunities to agree on or challenge visionary statements:



Priorities which emerge from the vision activities are the global goals – which by definition will be long term and overarching. Whilst global goals may change over time, nonetheless, it is the initial identification of these goals which provides a collective CLIL vision and which will steer the remaining stages. If, for example, one of the goals is to encourage learners to talk and use the CLIL vehicular language for learning, then this will not happen by osmosis. Instead, analysing what *enables* learners to talk is not only a theoretical consideration but a pragmatic one which permeates ethos-building, lesson planning, task types and assessment processes: What kind of language do learners need in this unit? What are the ‘talk demands’ of the tasks? What kind of tasks do we need in order to encourage ‘talk progression’? If we ask learners to discuss or debate, do they have the necessary linguistic support to enable them to do this? If not, what kind of scaffolding will help them? Are ‘talk demands’ at an appropriate level for their age and cognitive level of ability? Do learners really have to interact to complete these tasks? and so on. Questions such as these will dominate subsequent stages and will act as a planning tool created by teachers for teachers.

If you want to improve the quality of teaching, the most effective place to do so is the context of the classroom lesson . . . the challenge now becomes that of identifying the kinds of changes that will improve student learning . . . of sharing this knowledge with other teachers . . .

(Stigler and Hiebert, 1999: 111)

### Reflection points

- Who are the key players needed to form a CLIL teaching team?
- How can we communicate and share our ideas?
- Do we have a shared vision for CLIL? If so, what is it? If not, how shall we construct one?
- What is our ideal CLIL classroom and what goes on there?
- In an ideal setting, what do we want our CLIL learners and teachers to be able to achieve?
- Have we achieved a vision which is ‘owned’ by the group and which prioritizes different elements of our vision? (i.e. What are our global goals?)

As practice develops, visions can and do change over time. It is desirable that the CLIL vision is seen as a dynamic and iterative process which might change as the stages lead to reflection and review.

## Stage 2: Analysing and personalizing the CLIL context

This stage requires those responsible for the CLIL programme to construct a model for CLIL which not only grows from the vision created in Stage 1, but which also reflects the local situation. In Chapter 2 we discussed the variables such as school type and size, environment, teacher supply, regional as well as national policies, which all have a role to play in determining the type of CLIL appropriate for different contexts. Different variants of CLIL are best seen on a continuum where the learning focus and outcomes differ according to the context in which a model is adopted. Again, Chapter 2 provided an overview of potential models. At this stage ‘making the model our own’ is not detailed, but identifies the fundamental principles or the building blocks. Here are some teacher examples:

As geography teachers, we are interested in adapting some of our teaching units to explore the curriculum content from different perspectives. We thought a good starting point would be to choose a human geography unit on Senegal. If we teach the unit through French and use French resources, then this will give our students a very different experience.

In our vocational college, there is an emphasis on foreign language skills for career enhancement. Instead of separate language courses, we want to focus on developing a catering course where foreign language skills are integrated. This means that we will teach the catering course through Italian.

In our school, there is an emphasis on cross-curricular projects. As members of the senior management team, we want to involve both language teachers and subject teachers planning together. We had thought of three possibilities: a study of different aspects of eco-citizenship or the global village, fair trade or war and peace. We would also want to extend our international network through using new technologies and link with similar classes who could share the same language of communication.

We want to bring language learning alive and make it more relevant for our young people. So we decided to work on a content-based type of approach to a theme. This might include taking a typical language topic such as *Where we live* and carrying out a comparative study between house and home in an African and European cultural context.

In our primary school we want to extend our integrated approach across the curriculum. We thought that a study of ‘water’ through the medium of another language as well as in our own language could include poetry, science, geography, history, current catastrophes, water shortages, water for leisure, art, drama and music, linking language wherever possible to space and place.

We want to think ‘big’ – do a global project similar to those organized by *Science Across the World*, where identical topics (e.g. global warming, renewable energy, what we eat) are studied by learners in different countries and in different languages and then the results compared.

There are many other variations. Whilst each CLIL model will have its own global goals, different models all share a common founding belief: that CLIL has a valid contribution to make to personal development and preparation for working in a plurilingual world through the integration, in some way, of content learning and language learning.

#### Reflection points

- How can we as teachers share our ideas and skills?
- Is there leadership support for CLIL? What are the implications of the support?
- Who is involved in the teaching and the learning? Subject teachers? Language teachers? General teachers? Assistants? All of these?
- What are the implications of the above for constructing our own CLIL model? (e.g. Which subjects, themes, topics and languages? Which learners, classes?)
- What are the implications of the above for less capable learners?
- Does our CLIL programme have a dominant language, subject or citizenship orientation or are these integrated? What are the implications?
- How do our global goals impact on our CLIL model?
- How do we involve the wider community, such as parents, carers and significant others?
- Have we agreed on contextual opportunities and constraints?

### Stage 3: Planning a unit

Stage 3 provides a planning map for CLIL. It consists of four different planning steps using the 4Cs Framework and other conceptual tools which form part of the Tool Kit.

#### A conceptual framework

Before exploring the first step, it is useful to briefly revisit the 4Cs Framework. Its four major components can be summarized as follows:

#### Content

**Summary** Progression in new knowledge, skills and understanding.

At the heart of the learning process lies successful content or thematic learning and the related acquisition of new knowledge, skills and understanding. Content is the subject or the CLIL theme. It does not have to be part of a discrete curriculum discipline such as maths or history, it can be drawn from alternative approaches to a curriculum involving cross-curricular and integrated studies. It is useful to think of content in terms of the knowledge, skills and understanding we wish our learners to access, rather than simply knowledge acquisition.

**Communication**

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**Summary** Interaction, progression in language using and learning.

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Language is a conduit for communication and for learning which can be described as *learning to use language and using language to learn*. Communication in this sense goes beyond the grammar system, but at the same time does not reject the essential role of grammar and lexis in language learning. It involves learners in using language in a way which is often different from more traditional language lessons (of course, CLIL involves learners in learning language too, but in a different way). It is perhaps useful here to differentiate between language learning (often with an emphasis on grammatical progression) and language using (with an emphasis on the communication and learning demands of the moment). There are similarities with the kind of language approaches which influence CBI (content-based instruction), TBI (task-based instruction) and EAL (English as an Additional Language – that is, for those students who have to learn through the medium of another language, in this case English). All of these approaches explore to different degrees and with different emphases the relationship between language learning and the content within which it is situated. CLIL integrates content learning and language learning so that both are important.

**Cognition**

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**Summary** Engagement in higher-order thinking and understanding, problem solving, and accepting challenges and reflecting on them.

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For CLIL to be effective, it must challenge learners to create new knowledge and develop new skills through reflection and engagement in higher-order as well as lower-order thinking. CLIL is not about the transfer of knowledge from an expert to a novice. CLIL is about allowing individuals to construct their own understandings and be challenged – whatever their age or ability. As we discussed in Chapter 3, a useful taxonomy to guide planning for cognitive challenge is that of Anderson and Krathwohl (2001), since it explores the relationship between cognitive processing (learning) and knowledge acquisition (of content) particularly relevant to CLIL. It is not suggested that taxonomies are rigidly followed, but rather that they serve as a stimulus and reference for planning, discussion and evaluating practice.

**Culture**

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**Summary** ‘Self’ and ‘other’ awareness, identity, citizenship, and progression towards pluricultural understanding.

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Culture is not a postscript. It is a thread which weaves its way throughout any topic or theme. Sometimes referred to as the ‘forgotten C’, it adds learning value to CLIL contexts, yet demands careful consideration. For our pluricultural and plurilingual world to be celebrated and its potential realized, this demands tolerance and understanding. Studying through a different language is fundamental to fostering international understanding. If learners understand the concept of ‘otherness’ then this is likely to lead to a



deeper understanding of ‘self’ (Byram, 2008). It could be argued that in the CLIL classroom the use of appropriate authentic materials and intercultural curricular linking can contribute to a deeper understanding of difference and similarities between cultures, which in turn impacts on discovering ‘self’. CLIL offers rich potential for developing notions of pluricultural citizenship and global understanding – but these need to be planned and transparent (Commission of the European Communities, 2008). Moreover, extending CLIL content to include intercultural understanding is not always obvious. It needs to be thought through to ensure meaningful connections rather than tokenistic reference. If there is a class-to-class link (or sister class) already connecting schools across different cultures, then including intercultural elements in project planning will be easier. In CLIL, culture can include extending the content – for example, ‘the bicycle as a means of transport across the world’ as a topic in a technology class; setting the context of the content in different cultures – for example, investigating patterns in Asian and European architecture in a mathematics or design class; discussing how learners in different cultures might approach the same content topic – for example, attitudes to recycling; or exploring and interpreting the curriculum as a global citizen.

Whilst the 4Cs can be outlined individually, they do not exist as separate elements. Connecting the 4Cs into an integrated whole is fundamental to planning. For example, exploring how cognitive elements interconnect with content will determine the type of tasks which will be planned. Similarly, relating cognition to communication will demand careful consideration of classroom activities to ensure that learners not only have access to the content language, but also to the classroom language needed to carry out the tasks.

However, it is content which initially guides the overall planning along the learning route. This is to avoid limiting or reducing the content to match the linguistic level of the learners. It is likely that learners will need to access some linguistic forms in CLIL lessons before they have met them ‘formally’, say, in a second or additional language grammar lesson. If we return to the example of the science experiment in Chapter 3, the context demands that learners use the past tense to give an explanation of what happens when chemicals react. Moreover, this explanation will have to follow the ‘norms’ of reporting a science experiment. In other words, the CLIL lessons will have to enable the learners to use the past tense appropriately and follow the discourse norms of the subject, thereby using the CLIL language in alternative ways. Instruction in the past tense may initially be in the form of using key phrases without studying tense formation at this stage. The emphasis is always on accessibility of language in order to learn. It is unlikely, however, that learners will have linguistic levels in the CLIL language which match their cognitive levels. It is not pedagogically acceptable for learners to be reduced either to using inappropriate tenses or to using language phrases which are cognitively undemanding – the ‘I like it because I like it’ syndrome – unless justified as confidence-building and using the familiar as a springboard at the start of a unit. Moreover, trying to progress the language too quickly without remedial work, practice and recycling linguistic functions and notions may result in confusion, error and demotivation.

CLIL integrates language learning and content learning at cognitive and cultural levels appropriate to the learners. It is this integration which results in new learning scenarios

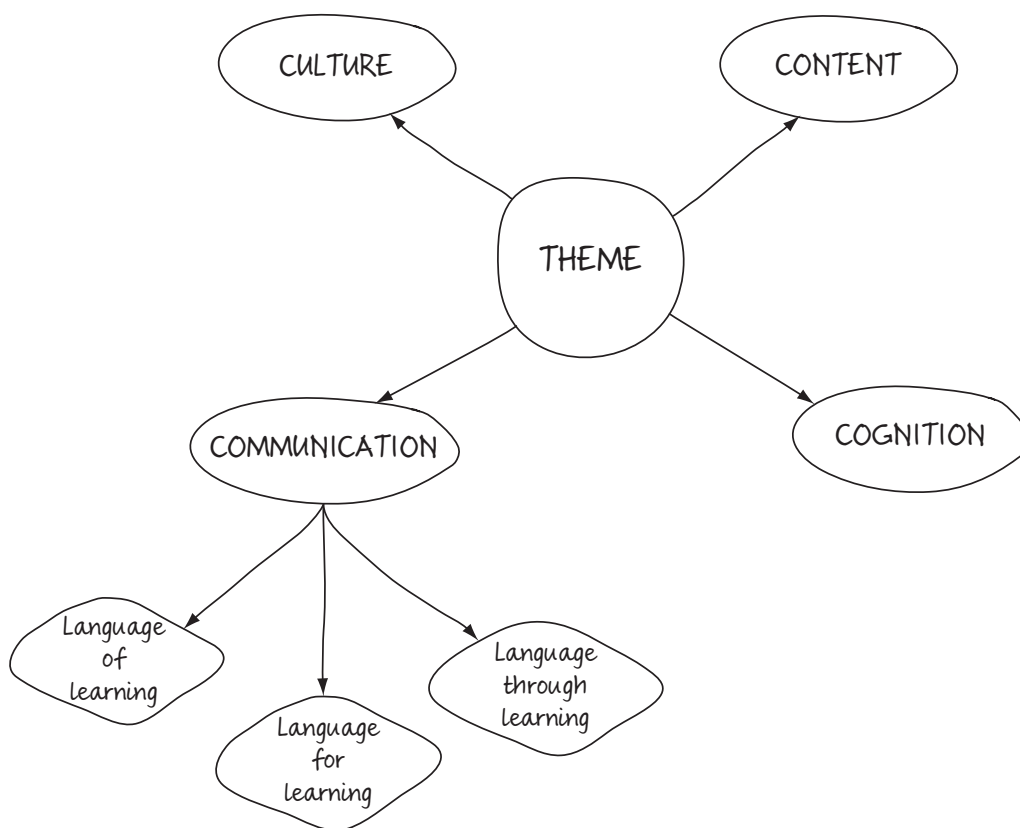


which are different from regular language or content lessons. CLIL demands careful planning for progression in all Cs, and the Cs may progress at different rates depending on the context. This enables teachers to adopt a more holistic and inclusive approach to classroom practice. Global goals may be a useful starting point (see Stage 1), but more detailed planning may be facilitated by using the 4Cs Framework.

Stage 3 is the most detailed stage in the planning process. It involves the careful analysis of different elements of CLIL as suggested in the 4Cs Framework. We recommend using a mind map or similar visual organizer to create a unit of work. A unit might consist of a series of lessons over a specific period of time or a theme. In the following section, we continue to provide suggestions for promoting team decision-making and collaborative planning. These suggestions are based on questions which are divided into four steps. By selecting questions relevant to individual contexts, each step will build up a picture so that, by the fourth step, planners will have an overview of a unit, consisting of key elements and prioritized aspects for teaching and learning. These components also relate directly to global goals identified in Stage 1. An illustration of a simple template which can be used as a starting point for each of the four steps is provided below.

### Mind map template

- Global Goal: .....
- Unit Title: .....



Throughout the four steps we construct a mind map using the template to build up an overview of an example unit, concluding with the complete mind map in Figure 5, page 66. This process does not go into the detail of individual lesson planning. Lesson plans require the completed map to provide the stimulus for task design and sequencing across different lessons of a unit. The mind map we construct in this chapter draws on a similar one created by a team of CLIL teachers in a planning workshop. The theme of their unit is *Habitats*. The teachers explored each step in depth, selecting questions, discussing them and adding points to their mind map. The teachers were working with learners at lower-secondary level. The global goal was to encourage more spontaneous talk between learners. Further examples from the teachers' workshop can be found in the Appendix.

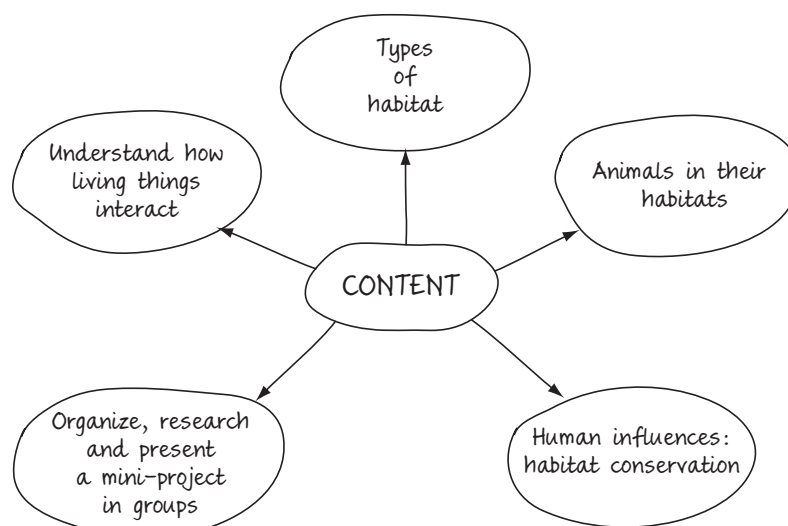
- Global Goal: Encourage learners to talk more confidently
- Unit Title: Habitats

#### Four steps for unit planning

##### Step 1: Considering content

###### Reflection points

- Is there a choice of content? If so, which is the most appropriate for our CLIL setting?
- Do we have to use an existing syllabus or curriculum?
- How will we select new knowledge, skills and understanding of the theme to teach?
- What will the students learn? (i.e. What are the learning outcomes?)
- Is progression in learning taken into account?
- Do we have to prioritize the content to be included?
- How does the content develop our global goal(s)?

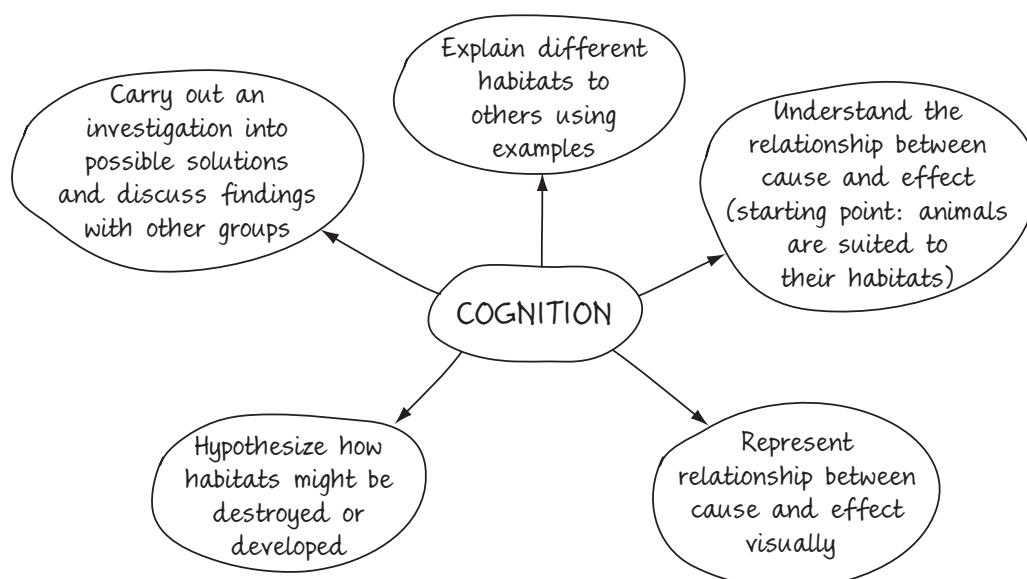


**Step 2: Connecting content and cognition**

Given an outline of the content, the next step is to analyse and select the thinking skills, problem solving and creativity which connect with the content. This process ensures that the cognitive level of the CLIL unit relates to the learners' own levels of development.

**Reflection points**

- Use a taxonomy of thinking skills such as Bloom's (1956) or Anderson and Krathwohl's (2001) for reference (refer to Chapter 3). Which cognitive skills seem to be most appropriate for development in terms of the content?
- Are we encouraging the use of higher-order thinking (HOTS) such as hypothesizing and problem solving as well as lower-order thinking (LOTS) such as remembering, understanding and applying new knowledge?
- Which activities or task types are likely to encourage the development of these skills?
- How do we deal with the linguistic demands of these tasks to ensure linguistic progression?
- What kind of questions must we ask in order to go beyond 'display' questions and present students with challenging problem-solving, hypothesizing, analysing and evaluation tasks?
- What kind of questions do we want our learners to ask?
- Have students been given opportunities to discuss their new knowledge and understanding?
- How do we know what the students have learned? How are our formative assessment tasks used to inform further learning?
- How does/do our global goal(s) fit with developing cognition?



### Step 3: Communication – Defining language learning and using

The next step links the content and cognitive demands with communication, using the Language Triptych described in Chapter 3 (language *of*, *for* and *through* learning). It is perhaps this step which is the most challenging – for subject teachers it demands an awareness of different types of language used for different purposes; for language teachers it requires an alternative approach to language learning and language using without rejecting successful classroom practice. It uses a pragmatic as well as a linguistic approach to developing language through use. It is not built on a grammatical model where progression focuses on a gradation of grammatical concepts, but incorporates grammatical progression from different perspectives. The Triptych starts with the language needed by content. It relates language learning to progression through the conceptual understanding of the content, rather than progression in grammatical awareness typified by learning present tense before past tense and so on. The Triptych does not reject grammar learning but instead approaches it initially through content demands. There may be times when specific grammar is needed and teachers will make decisions as to the range of options open; for example, teach the grammar point at the time when it is needed in the CLIL lesson to focus learner attention on the linguistic form; from a content perspective, liaise with the language teacher for its inclusion in a language-learning lesson; integrate the grammar point through different uses across CLIL lessons, adopting a more immersive approach; explore literacy practices across the school for a more integrated approach.

Identifying the language needed to learn in a CLIL classroom demands systematic analysis at the planning stage. The analysis reaches far beyond key words and phrases and other grammatical functions (content-obligatory language, which is necessary if the learner is to participate fully in learning the content). It addresses progression in form and function, process and outcomes, and encourages the creative use of spontaneous language by learners. It involves language practice and language use in the spiral of language progression – as introduced in Chapter 3 – where recycled language is developed further (content-compatible language, which allows the learner to operate more fully in the content subject). It requires an analysis of the linguistic genre – that is, the type of discourse and language which is embedded in different content subjects or themes. An example is the ‘language of science’, which goes far beyond key items of specialized vocabulary of the subject itself (content-obligatory language) and includes an understanding of language needed to operate successfully (report writing, carrying out laboratory experiments and so on – content-compatible language).

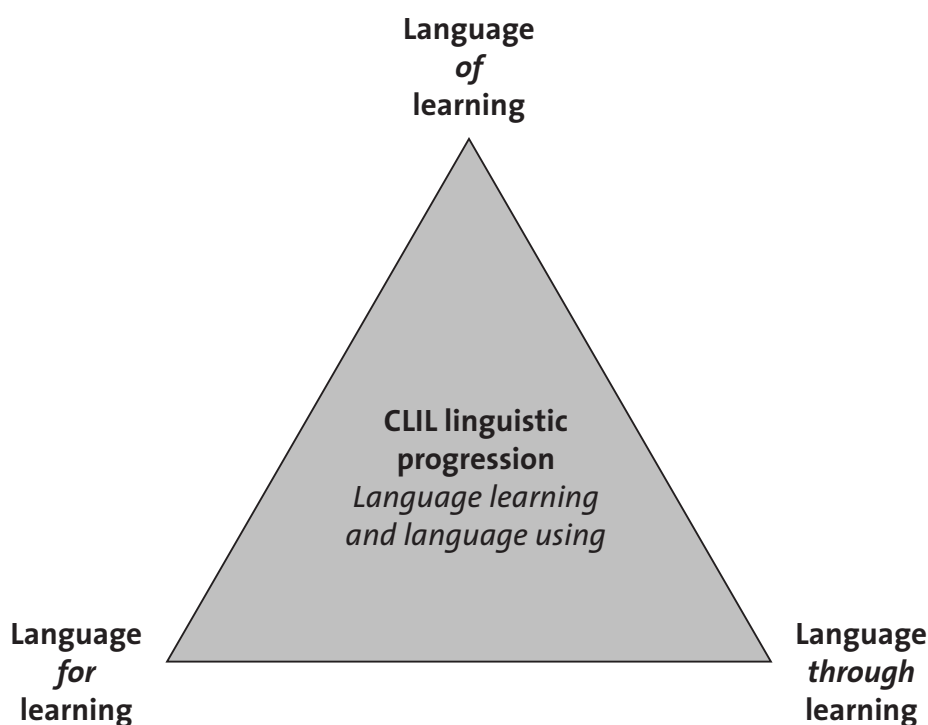
### *The Language Triptych*

The term ‘triptych’ is used to identify an image consisting of three linked parts. Whilst each of the components of the Language Triptych have been explored in depth in Chapter 3 (and see Figure 1, repeated below), we recommend familiarizing the CLIL planning team with these elements before planning.

A preliminary activity useful for raising awareness of the linguistic genre associated with particular subjects or themes (in order to identify content-obligatory and content-compatible language) is to analyse a written or oral text drawn from the subject field. For example, science texts would typically contain ‘cause and effect’ constructions (*Explain what causes high blood pressure and how this affects an individual*) and use questions requiring evidence (*Justify the use of biofuels*). Reflect on how differently you might use the text in either a language lesson or a first-language content lesson. Another useful tool is to audio-record language used by teachers and students as they learn and interact in first-language classes to begin to build a **corpus** of the type of language used in classrooms for different purposes, to be transferred and developed in the CLIL language.

A **corpus** is a collection of writing or speech which can be analysed to find out, for example, which words and grammatical structures writers or speakers typically use in particular texts or situations (see O’Keeffe, McCarthy and Carter, 2007, for information on the use and construction of corpora in the classroom).

**Figure 1: The Language Triptych (repeated from page 36)**

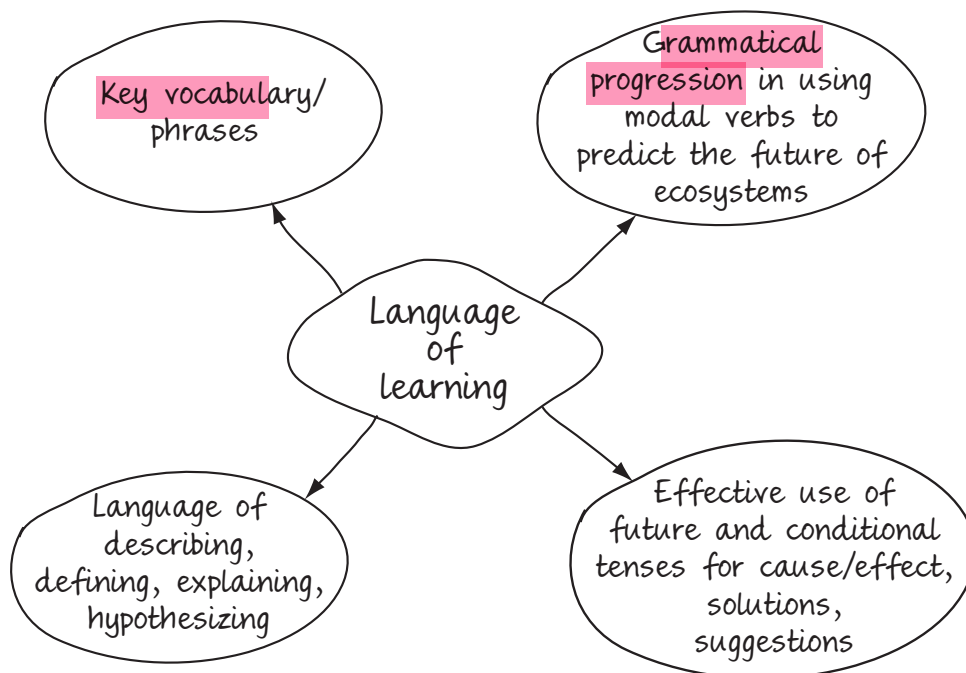


### Language of learning

The first aspect of the Triptych is the language *of* learning. This explores what language learners will need to access new knowledge and understanding when dealing with the content. In the case of the *Habitats* example, the language *of* learning consists of the key vocabulary and phrases related to habitats, deforestation, human influences, and so on. However, it goes beyond a list of key phrases. If the learners are required to define habitats, they will need to embed the lexis into ‘defining’ language. It is not enough to simply identify key words and phrases without considering *how* learners will need to use them in order to learn. The following reflection points will serve to identify key words and phrases and the language in which these will be embedded:

#### Reflection points

- What type of language (genre) does this subject or theme use? How shall we ensure learners have access to this?
- Define the content-obligatory language, such as key words, phrases and grammatical demands of the unit (e.g. the language of discussing, hypothesizing, analysing). How is this introduced and practised?
- What kind of talk do learners need to engage in and how do we build in progression over time? (e.g. the extension of the language of discussion over several lessons)
- What is the most effective way of teaching the language of learning? (e.g. specific tasks, content-embedded practice, grammar rules)
- Which of the identified language and skills shall we target for development in this particular unit?

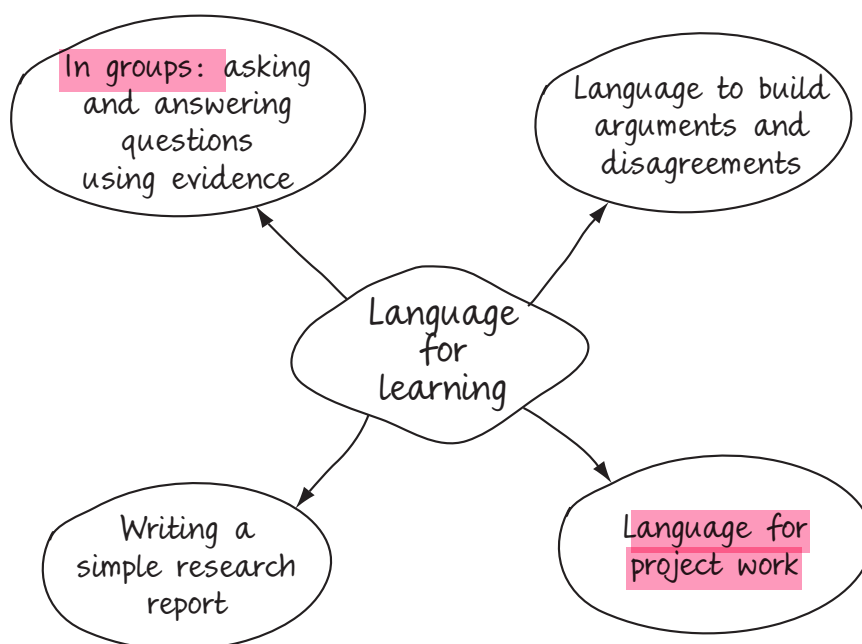


### Language *for* learning

Arguably, the language *for* learning is the most crucial element for successful CLIL, as it makes transparent the language needed by learners to operate in a learning environment where the medium is not their first language. In the *Habitats* project, language *for* learning is linked to the language students will need during lessons to carry out the planned activities effectively. For example, if the students are required to organize, research and present a mini-project, then they will need language which will enable them to work successfully in groups, carry out their research and present their work without reading from a sheet.

#### Reflection points

- What kind of language do learners need to operate effectively in this CLIL unit?
- What are the possible language demands of typical tasks and classroom activities? (e.g. how to work in groups, organize research)
- How will these be taught?
- Which language skills will need to be developed? (e.g. discussion skills)
- How are we developing metacognitive strategies? (Learning how to learn – e.g. reading strategies, comprehension strategies)
- How can learning be scaffolded (supported) by the teaching and learning of specific language? (e.g. language used to seek additional information, assistance, explanation and access to other sources)
- How do students practise their new language and recycle familiar language?
- Have we prioritized the language for learning in this unit in relation to the content? (i.e. what students need to know at which stage of the content – e.g. focus on developing reasoning, making a case)
- Is the language which is used to assess the learning accessible to the learners?



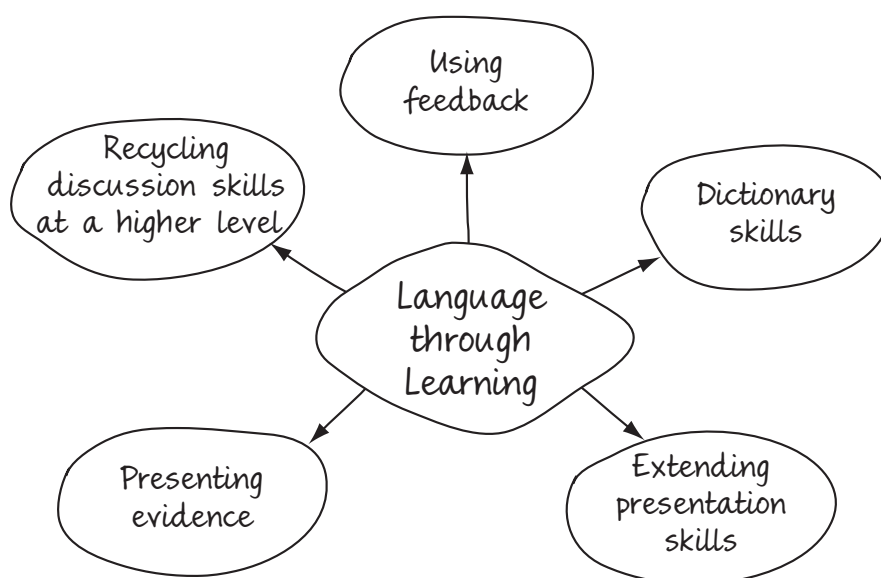


### Language *through* learning

New language will emerge *through* learning. Not all the CLIL language needed can be planned for. As new knowledge, skills and understanding develop, then so too will new language. Moreover, as language is linked to cognitive processing, it is important to make use of opportunities (both spontaneous and planned) to advance learning – to encourage learners to articulate their understanding, which in turn advances new learning. The challenge for teachers is how to capitalize on, recycle and extend new language so that it becomes embedded in the learners' repertoire. Language progression in this sense can be defined as the systematic development of emerging language from specific contexts, supported by structured grammatical awareness, using known language in new ways, accessing unknown language and so on. Thinking of these processes as a spiral is helpful (see Chapter 3, Figure 2). It also provides an alternative approach to a transmission model where either much of the language input is pre-determined or translated from the first language. In the *Habitats* project, language *through* learning may emerge if, for example, during the mini-project preparation, students working in groups need language to express a new idea which they have constructed and which is not in their resources – this might involve dictionary work and teacher support.

#### Reflection points

- What necessary language functions and notions do the students know already? How can these be practised and extended?
- What strategies can our learners use to access new language for themselves?
- When new language emerges, how shall we capture and select language for further development?
- How can we define language progression in this unit?

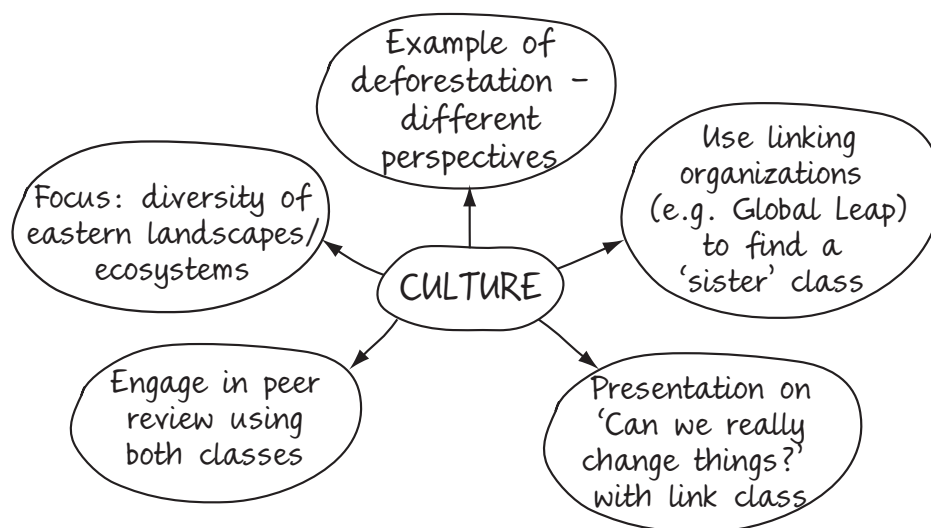


#### Step 4: Developing cultural awareness and opportunities

In previous chapters, reasons for embedding CLIL in a cultural agenda were discussed in depth. The point made was that, although raising cultural awareness is a starting point, often this resides in the ‘foods and festivals’ approach. The fourth C in effect permeates throughout the other Cs, promoting CLIL as a key player in the plurilingual and pluricultural movement. It is therefore our responsibility to investigate the most accessible means through which our learners can work alongside other learners from different cultures and with different first languages. Shared learning experiences such as these go some way towards addressing fundamental issues of ‘otherness’ and ‘self’. Integrating cultural opportunities into the CLIL classroom is not an option, it is a necessity. Intercultural experiences can be developed from different perspectives to make CLIL a ‘lived-through’ experience: for example, through the ethos of the classroom, through curriculum linking with other classes, through the content of the unit or through connections made with the wider world. As technology becomes more readily available and a feasible option for many schools, it is likely that such links may well involve a range of technologies.

##### Reflection points

- What different types of cultural implications are there for development in this topic?
- Can the content be adapted to make the cultural agenda more accessible?
- How do we actively involve the learners in developing their pluricultural understanding?
- What is the approach to CLIL culture in our school and beyond?
- What kind of curriculum links are available with other schools (regional, national, global)? How can these be best used?
- Where is the added value of studying this topic through the medium of another language? What opportunities arise?
- How does culture impact on the other Cs?



Stage 3 has focused on the construction of an overview of unit planning using a visual planning tool. It is unlikely that ready-made mind maps or published curriculum content lists will include the steps outlined in Stage 3. However, by constructing these maps, teachers ‘own’ the process. The time invested in such rigorous planning embeds CLIL pedagogies in classroom practice. The mapping process involves selecting appropriate questions – some easy and some difficult, some with answers and others without. The questions seek to move professional thinking forwards in a collaborative and supportive way. In other words, the mind-mapping process involves CLIL teachers in selecting and prioritizing *what* will be taught and *how* within the context of their own schools or institutions. Decisions sometimes result in potential opportunities being put aside to be reconsidered at another time. Other decisions are difficult to make. However, a sharp focus on which elements of the 4Cs most appropriately fit the global goals, the aims and objectives of the unit and the context in which it will be taught is crucial for overall effective planning and to ensure that learner progression over time is systemically reviewed. The 4Cs Framework can be adapted, changed and re-worked according to different contextual priorities. It is not a set formula. Readers may wish to refer to the complete set of questions in the Appendix to select items which best serve their contexts or add further questions of their own.

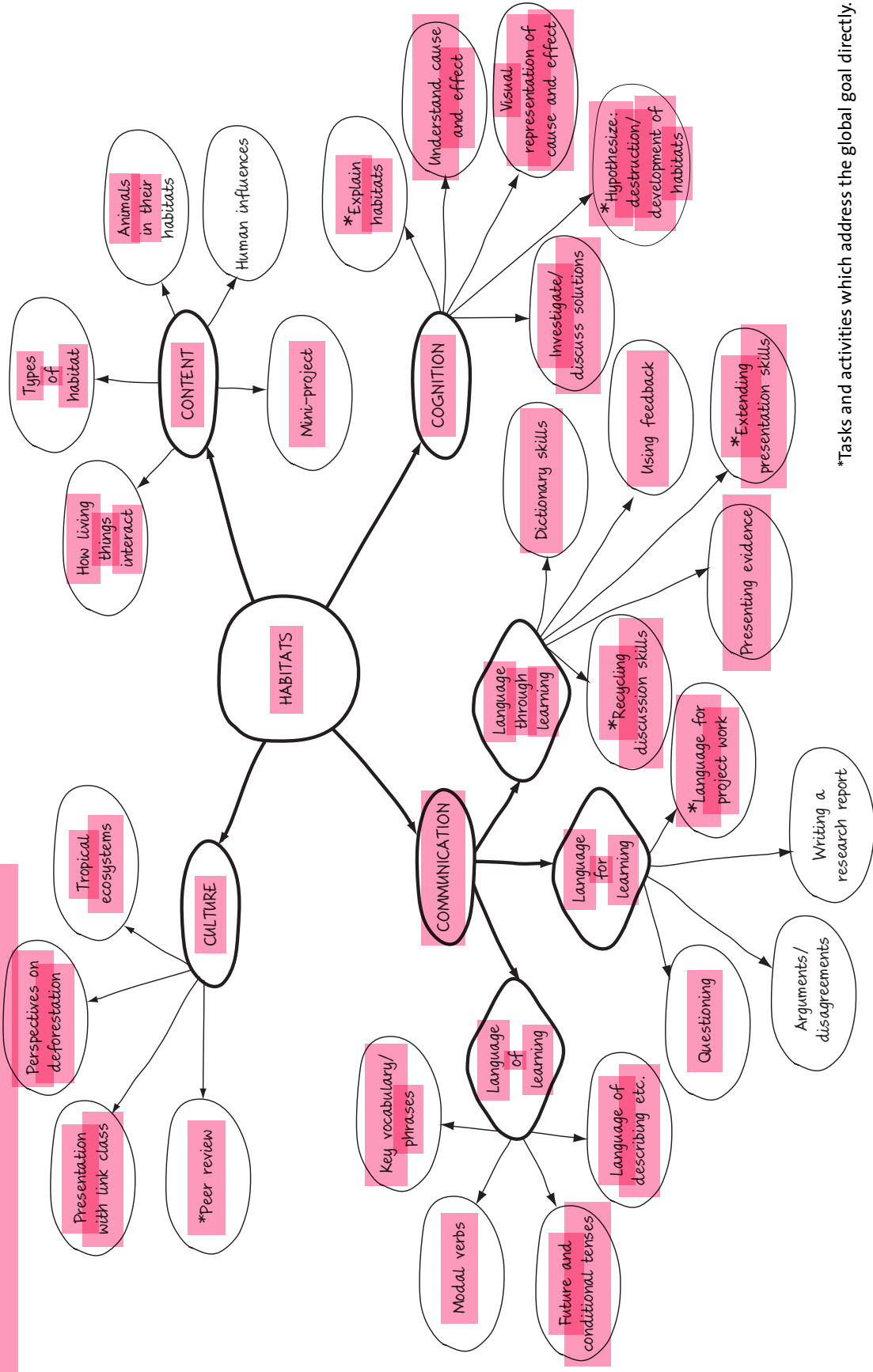
#### Stage 4: Preparing the unit

At the fourth stage, the mind map is transformed into materials, resources, tasks and activities. It involves bringing together good practice in non-CLIL settings with alternative approaches in order to match the demands of the teaching aims and outcomes determined by the unit. It involves the careful analysis of the map into a series of lessons based on the identified key elements. An example lesson plan is included in the Appendix. This stage is usually the most time-consuming. There are few ready-made materials which respond to the needs of context-specific units. Using materials designed for learning in non-CLIL contexts is potentially both linguistically and culturally problematic. In some countries, the textbook is the determinant of classroom practice. This is not so in CLIL (see Chapter 5 which deals with issues of materials and task design). Moreover, a *carte blanche* for materials can be overwhelming without appropriate support and time. Since innovation and change make demands on those involved, developing professional learning communities within and between institutions for sharing resources and ideas is a practical way forward. More CLIL digital networks are emerging and with them teacher support, materials banks and repositories.

It is also worth revisiting the role of what is arguably a teacher’s most important resource: the use of questions. In CLIL environments, where cognition is integrated with learning and communication, teacher questioning, which encourages learner questioning, is fundamental to higher-order thinking skills, creativity and linguistic progression. We know that display questions are used in many classrooms: the teacher asks a question, the learner gives an answer and the teacher affirms or rejects the response, usually with a comment such as ‘right’, ‘good’, ‘no’. We also know that this type of exchange limits communication. So, working with a range of question types for opening up communication in line

Figure 5: Habitats mind map

Global Goal: Encourage confident talk



\*Tasks and activities which address the global goal directly.

with the subject demands reminds us that CLIL is about effective classroom practice. However, the more demanding the questions, the more attention will be needed to ensure that learners can access the language needed to respond to and develop them. Perhaps the ‘richest’ tool for any CLIL teacher is asking learners the question ‘why?’, since a response activates a thread of simultaneous and integrated learning demands embedded in the 4Cs. More detailed discussion of issues relating to classroom discourse, tasks and activities are presented in the following chapter.

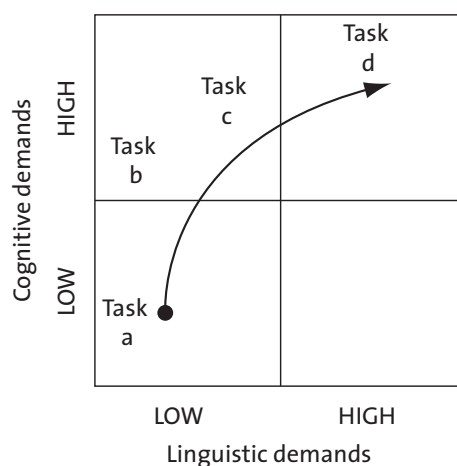
### Reflection points

- Which materials/units are already available? How appropriate are they?
- Which resources need adapting and how?
- Which resources can be accessed via the Internet?
- Are there CLIL materials banks in our region? If not, how can we create them?
- How do we extend our repertoire of tasks and activities?
- Can we share lesson plan templates across institutions and contexts?
- What makes a good CLIL lesson?
- How can we ensure cohesion between our teaching aims and the learning outcomes?
- How can we plan for learner progression noting that, from a holistic view, students are not expected to develop across the 4Cs at the same rate (this will depend on the type of unit)?

## Stage 5: Monitoring and evaluating CLIL in action

Monitoring the development of a unit and evaluating the processes and outcomes are integral to the teaching and learning process. This stage, however, is not about assessing student learning. Assessment is part of the learning cycle, but – due to its complex nature in CLIL – it will be explored in detail in Chapter 6. Stage 5, by contrast, focuses on understanding classroom processes as they evolve to gain insights which inform future planning. One of the greatest challenges for CLIL teachers is to develop a learning environment which is linguistically accessible whilst being cognitively demanding – one in which progression in both language and content learning develops systematically. The CLIL Matrix presented in Chapter 3 and based on Cummins’ work (1984) is a tool which CLIL teachers find useful for ‘measuring’ and analysing the interconnectedness of cognitive and linguistic levels of tasks and materials used during a unit.

In the example at Figure 6, positioning tasks in appropriate quadrants illustrates how the CLIL Matrix can be used to monitor, sequence and scaffold learning. When tasks and activities are selected across a CLIL unit, a detailed picture emerges. The results provide CLIL teachers with a means to audit tasks and activities, to match these to their learners’ needs and to monitor learning progression in terms of linguistic and cognitive development. Figure 6 audits four selected tasks over several lessons.

**Figure 6: Auditing tasks using the CLIL Matrix (adapted from Cummins, 1984)**

The tasks follow a route from low linguistic and cognitive demands to high linguistic and cognitive demands. Task (a) was aimed at instilling confidence in the learners by starting with familiar work as a point of reference. Task (b) used recycled language, but this task made cognitive demands on the learners by introducing abstract concepts whilst using visuals to scaffold the new knowledge. Task (c) continued to develop new knowledge, but this time the language demands involved extending familiar language into more complex structures required to carry out the activity. The final task (d) incorporated new language and new content where the learners were engaged in cooperative group work supported by technological and teacher mediation. The new language was practised in different ways.

The CLIL Matrix of course raises issues for discussion amongst teachers, such as what is meant by ‘cognitively demanding’ and ‘linguistically accessible’ in specific contexts. Other typical questions focus on how to make materials linguistically accessible, especially when concepts are challenging; which quadrants are desirable or acceptable and which are not; and how to progress from low to high linguistic demands whilst maintaining high levels of cognitive demand. Teachers have reported that the CLIL Matrix can reveal challenging information and unexpected gaps in support for learner progression.

Some teachers have also found it helpful to create their own unit checklists drawn from issues raised and prioritized in the unit mind map and CLIL Matrix task audit. An example of one such checklist is included in the Appendix. It was drawn up by a group of teachers from two schools working together on a CLIL unit. The teachers compiled the checklist by working through stages presented in this chapter. Whilst it could be argued that checklists have limitations, nonetheless, the processes involved in creating a unit checklist encourage reflection and discussion. Moreover, the checking process is part of monitoring learner progression in different ways (for example, through the 4Cs and the Matrix) and as such these tools provide essential understanding in a ‘plan–do–review’ reflective cycle. Examples of planning materials, including a lesson plan and teacher notes, are included in the Appendix.

**Reflection points**

- How can we monitor student progression in their learning?
- What kind of formative and summative feedback tasks are built in?
- Have we used the CLIL Matrix for a materials and task audit? Which quadrant and why?
- Have we consulted learners about their progress and made it visible?
- Have we built in times to revisit the unit mind map?

**Stage 6: Next steps – Towards inquiry-based professional learning communities**

To develop as CLIL professionals, to gain confidence, to explore the CLIL agenda, to take risks and move beyond the familiar, it is desirable that teachers belong to or build a professional learning community where everyone considers themselves as learners as well as teachers. Shulman (1999) goes further and suggests a model for pedagogical reasoning and action. This involves teachers sharing their own understanding of what is to be taught and learned, transforming ideas into ‘teachable’ and ‘learnable’ activities, connecting these with decisions about the optimal organization of the learning environment, followed by evaluation, reflection and new understandings for classroom teaching and learning. This mirrors the classroom learning cycle and supports teachers in asking questions about their own practice – isolated professionals rarely have these opportunities.

As the CLIL movement gains momentum, professional learning communities are also growing to meet emerging professional needs. The ease with which the Internet can connect CLIL professionals is rapidly increasing as more CLIL groups and individual teachers are networking for sharing ideas, materials and practice. However, for professional communities to be organic, they need to have a sense of purpose and involve a wide range of professionals in collaborative and innovative projects, as well as in supporting each other in a ‘safe’ environment:

One of the most powerful resources that people in any organisation have for learning and improving is each other. Knowledge economies depend on collective intelligence and social capital – including ways of sharing and developing knowledge among fellow professionals. Sharing ideas and expertise, providing moral support when dealing with new and difficult challenges, discussing complex individual cases together – this is the essence of strong collegiality and the basis for professional communities.

(Hargreaves, 2003: 84)

The following section gives an example of how one particular approach – LOCIT – has been successfully used by a range of teachers to provide a concrete way to share and discuss their classroom practice.



**LOCIT: Lesson Observation and Critical Incident Technique**

Sharing classroom practice in a forum which goes beyond materials preparation and learning outcomes involves CLIL teachers in constructing their own theories of practice. Over 30 years ago, Stenhouse noted: 'It is not enough that teachers' work should be studied: they need to study it themselves' (1975: 143). This still holds. The idea of teachers 'owning' their practice has permeated this chapter. It is particularly important in contexts where national curricula are prescriptive or the CLIL approach does not immediately fit with a government's pre-determined or traditional measures. Stage 6 is to do with sharing reflections on CLIL practice in order to move towards sharing inquiry-based practice. This reflects van Lier's belief that awareness-raising collaboration turns the classroom from 'a field of activity into a subject of enquiry [which] can promote deep and lasting changes in educational practice' (1996: 69).

In conjunction with the classroom research cycle – the 'plan–do–review' cycle referred to earlier in the chapter – a more recent contribution to the development of professional learning which involves inquiry-based practice is the Lesson Observation and Critical Incident Technique (LOCIT) process (Coyle, 2005). Used extensively with groups of CLIL teachers, LOCIT's overarching goal is to provide a framework for professional collaboration, confidence-building and theory development from a 'bottom-up' or practical perspective. The LOCIT process encourages teachers to work closely with each other to act as a supportive 'critical friend' – someone who is trusted to provide constructive feedback. LOCIT colleagues are 'buddies' – professionals who support and trust other professionals, who engage in supportive yet analytical dialogue.

***So what is LOCIT?***

LOCIT enables teachers to build up and share practice-based evidence of successful CLIL. The LOCIT process typically involves filming a whole lesson or series of lessons, editing the key 'learning moments' and comparing edited clips with learners and colleagues. The lesson selected for analysis is one chosen by the teachers or learners. When classroom learning is captured and discussed by teachers and learners together, it leads to shared understandings of learning which impact on practice. In other words, lessons are reviewed and analysed using the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) for reflection and in-depth, focused discussion. LOCIT involves listening to and working with learners and aims to give them a 'voice' to articulate their own learning. It defines and compares different 'learning moments' and above all it is positive and constructive. In the early stages of LOCIT, teachers often choose to record a lesson where they are confident that some good practice will be captured. In some cases a colleague observes the lesson, or the observation is carried out by a 'buddy' from a CLIL network school using video conferencing. It is also usual that the CLIL teacher will have an identified focus for developing CLIL learning in the classroom, such as exploring question techniques or encouraging learner talk.

Once a CLIL lesson has been recorded (LO), the next step is for participants to review, analyse and edit the film. The edited version of selected video clips must be no longer than 10–15 minutes. The objective of the analysis is to capture moments in a lesson when the

teachers, colleagues and the learners consider that learning has taken place. The Critical Incident Technique (CIT) therefore guides the editing process of a particular lesson and first requires the editors (teacher, colleagues and/or students) to select small clips which in their view represent ‘learning moments’ in the lesson, often using agreed questions such as ‘When did new learning occur in the lesson?’, ‘How did it happen?’, ‘Why did it happen?’ Downloadable software can be used for editing purposes.

The CIT analysis demands reflection and discussion. For example, small groups of students can work on the lesson analysis in a technology lesson whilst improving their skills in using a digital editing tool. Alternatively, reviewing the lesson in small groups and describing the learning moments in a variety of ways, such as written descriptors, grids or oral reports, is also feasible. Whatever the medium, those involved in the LOCIT process need to select retrospective learning moments. In so doing, learners engage in shared reflections on what enables them to learn. Colleagues and researchers follow the same procedures.

The final stage is to compare the edited versions – either in class with students to encourage reflection and discussion about CLIL learning, or between colleagues/researchers, which tends to focus more on teaching. The edits act as a catalyst for deep discussions, comparisons and reflections on different aspects of CLIL practice. These discussions provide feedback which guides future planning and provides a forum for prioritizing classroom practice. In effect, these ‘learning conversations’ form the basis of an organic theory of practice – owned by teachers, learners and colleagues:

Since all teachers have a theory of teaching, at least an implicit one, the first task of curricular renewal is to invite interested teachers to examine their own theory, making it explicit . . . and determine options for pedagogical action on its basis.

(van Lier, 1996: 28)

### Reflection points

- What methods can we use to evaluate what we have done and identify lessons learned?
- How can we feed into the next cycle what was successful and change what was not?
- Can we review progress with colleagues using LOCIT?
- How can we network and share materials with others?
- How can we network with other teachers and students outside our school?
- Where can we find more good ideas?
- How does this experience enable us to reflect on our own professional learning? What works well? What doesn’t, and what must we do as a result?
- Are we constructing our own theory of practice? If so, can we talk it through?

In this chapter we have presented a series of tools which can be used and adapted for guiding CLIL practice: from the initial steps of sharing a vision to the planning, teaching and monitoring of learning and, to complete the cycle, a reflection of classroom events.

However, it is collaboration with other CLIL colleagues which feeds and supports our professional thinking and ideas. Professional learning communities where teachers can work together are fundamental to our work. The LOCIT process described above serves as a useful starting point for community building since sharing video clips is a tangible event. This sharing process starts well within an institution but begins to gain momentum when it connects teachers from a range of institutions, at different levels and from different subject orientations. CLIL science teachers have something to share with CLIL geography teachers or primary language teachers since the LOCIT clips do not focus on the subject itself, but at a deeper level on CLIL learning. Sharing ideas with evidence about how students of any age think they learn enables teachers to construct their own theories of practice – based on professional beliefs and practice-based evidence about how and why their students learn. Bringing CLIL teachers together in this way can lead to a deeper understanding of shared and individual practice – articulating what works and what doesn't in classrooms and why. Theories of practice are owned by the professionals who construct them and empower individuals as well as groups to take greater control of their own professional learning and to set realistic goals for the future. As one teacher who has experience of the LOCIT process explains:

In my class, I think the pupils learn best by doing and experimenting, so I have to get them to use commentaries as they work. This means they have to talk about what they are doing and why and what they are learning. The thing is, they can only do that if I am there to support them by asking the right sort of questions. This is hard to organize but I think I am getting there. They are getting used to doing this in another language . . . [F]or CLIL to work, these pupils really need to talk about their learning, so that's what I'm working on.

(quoted in Coyle, 2007)

As a postscript to this chapter we would like to reiterate that the ideas and suggestions are not meant to be interpreted as formulaic prescriptions for CLIL practice. Instead, they should stimulate debate and trigger ideas for individuals and groups to make sense of effective CLIL practice in their own settings, yet shared across CLIL communities and with other professionals – the focus is always on effective teaching and learning. As Wells concludes:

By selecting which aspects of practice they [teachers] wish to problematise, and by critically examining recorded observational data, together with other evidence their students provide, they are taking charge of their own professional development.

(Wells, 1999: 265)

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